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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/817,365	03/22/2001	Teiji Yamamoto	010417	2367
23850	7590	05/13/2002	EXAMINER	
ARMSTRONG, WESTERMAN & HATTORI, LLP 1725 K STREET, NW. SUITE 1000 WASHINGTON, DC 20006			PICKARD, ALISON K	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		3676		
DATE MAILED: 05/13/2002				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	09/817,365	Applicant(s)	YAMAMOTO ET AL.
Examiner	Alison K. Pickard	Art Unit	3676

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-3, 5-11 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 4 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 02 March 0201 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. Figures 6 and 7 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: reference numbers '32' and '33' have both been used to identify the inner diameter controller body (e.g. page 6, claims 2 and 3).

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

4. Claims 1, 3, 5, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by German reference DE 3434247.

DE '247 discloses seal assembly comprising a pair of seal rings 38, 39 comprising lip portions 48, 49 protruding in opposite axial directions and a load seal ring 33 compressed and inserted between the pair. The seal assembly is symmetric and comprises an inner-diameter controller body 47. The load ring comprises a groove (see Fig. 4).

Art Unit: 3676

5. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hatch (3,241,843).

Hatch discloses a seal assembly comprising a pair of seal rings 28 comprising lip portions (see Fig. 3) protruding in opposite axial directions, a load seal ring 23/24 inserted between the pair, and an outer diameter controller body 33.

6. Claims 7-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Boggs (3,492,054).

Boggs discloses a crawler-track connection structure comprising a pin 13 inserted through links 11, 12, a bushing 18 immobilized on one link 12, another bushing 17 on the side of a sprocket, and a seal assembly. The seal assembly is disposed between radial walls of the two bushings 18 and 17. The assembly comprises a load seal 23 and first and second 24 seal rings with lip portions. A ring body 27 is disposed on an inner diameter side of the load ring.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boggs in view of Johnson (5,069,509).

Boggs does not disclose a dust seal ring on an outer peripheral side of the seal assembly. Johnson teaches a dust seal 114 on an outer peripheral side of a seal assembly 110 to minimize the seal assembly's exposure to abrasive material. It would have been obvious for one of

ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the connection of Boggs with the dust seal of Johnson to protect the seal assembly from dust and abrasive material and affect a more efficient seal.

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claim 4 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alison K. Pickard whose telephone number is 703-305-0882. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (9-6:30), with alternate Friday's off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anthony Knight can be reached on 703-308-3179. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9326 for regular communications and 703-8729327 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 308-1113.

AP
May 6, 2002


Anthony Knight
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Group 3600